



# Rebuild Iowa Office

Governor Chester J. Culver  
Lt. Governor Patty Judge  
Lt Gen Ron Dardis, RIO Executive Director

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**Rebuild Iowa Coordinating Council**  
**December 17, 2009 10:00am-12:00pm**  
**State Historical Building-Meeting Room B**

**Members in Attendance:**

Lt Gen Ron Dardis	Rebuild Iowa Office (RIO)
Jerome Thompson	Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA)
Chuck Seel	Iowa Utilities Board (IUB)
Bill Ehm	Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
Robert Grayson	Office of Energy Independence (OEI)
Tom Schueller	State Representative
Joe O'Hern	Iowa Department of Economic Development (IDED)
Stuart Anderson	Department of Transportation (DOT)
Ljerka Vasiljevic	Department of Public Safety (DPS)
Joe Mowers	Iowa Workforce Development (IWD)
General Tim Orr	Adjutant General –Department of Public Defense (DPD)
John McCalley	Iowa Department on Aging (IDA)
Keith Greiner	Iowa College Student Aid Commission (ICSAC)
Dave Miller	Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division (HSEMD)
Doug Elliott	East Central Iowa Council of Governments (ECICOG)
Matt Unger	Governor's Office (IGOV)
Joseph Jones	Iowa Finance Authority (IFA)
Ben Rogers	Linn County Board of Supervisors (representing State Senator Rob Hogg)
Gary Schwartz	Department of Education (DE)
Jacqui DiGiacinto	Rebuild Iowa Office (RIO)

**Members not in Attendance:**

Pat Callahan	Iowa League of Cities
Bob Donley	Board of Regents
Pat Grassley	State Representative
Rob Hogg	State Senator
Jim Kenkel	Dept. of Public Safety (Fire Marshal)
Charlie Krogmeier	Dept. of Human Services (DHS)
Terrence Neuzil	Iowa State Association of Counties (ISAC)
Tom Newton	Iowa Dept. of Public Health (DPH)
Bill Northey	Iowa Dept. of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS)
Dick Oshlo	Dept. of Management (DOM)

Kim Reynolds

State Senator

**Observers/Presenters:**

Emily Hajek	Rebuild Iowa Office (RIO)
Deb Kozel	Legislative Services Agency (LSA)
John Benson	Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division (HSEMD)
Jace Mikels	State Democratic Caucus
Paulee Lipsman	House Democratic Staff
Tony Phillips	House Republican Staff
Tim Waddell	Iowa Department of Economic Development (IDED)
Darin Gage	Director of Policy and Administration Linn County
Linda Kinman	Iowa Association of Water Agencies (IAWA) Des Moines Water Works (DMWW)
Susan Judkins Josten	Rebuild Iowa Office (RIO)
Rod Boshart	Cedar Rapids Gazette
Tina Potthoff	Rebuild Iowa Office (RIO)

General Dardis opened the meeting by thanking everyone for being there and for their flexibility to the change of meeting dates and times due to the recent winter storm. He also introduced new participants Ben Rogers from Linn County Board of Supervisors, Darin Gage Director of Policy and Administration for Linn County, General Tim Orr Adjutant General of Iowa and Director of Public Defense, and all others that may be attending for the first time today.

The meeting minutes from October's Rebuild Iowa Coordinating Council were sent out to all board members via email on Wednesday for review. General Dardis asked for a motion to approve the minutes, Representative Schueller moved, Bill Ehm seconded and all approved.

The Duplication of Benefits Down Payment Assistance issue was resolved. Those disaster victims who replaced their homes were faced with the increased cost of replacement. A fifty year old home would cost forty thousand dollars more to replace. For those on a fixed-income, it was important to resolve the duplication of benefits issue. Although we were not able to get forty thousand, we were able to allow up to twenty-five thousand not to be considered a duplication of benefit. The Cedar Rapids average for increased cost of purchasing a comparable home was approximately twenty-four thousand dollars.

Since the last Coordinating Council meeting, four new business programs were announced. These new programs were the result of the collaboration of the small business task force, and local and state government and include:

- Business Rental Assistance
- Loan Interest Expense
- Commercial Rental Income Gap
- Residential Landlord Business Support.

The Business Rental Assistance Program is intended to offset lease payments for businesses located in a rental space damaged by the 2008 disasters. The program provides up to six months of assistance up to a maximum of fifty thousand dollars. The Loan Interest Expense Program provides assistance to businesses to cover the interest costs of SBA or private disaster loans with a maximum of fifty thousand per business. The Commercial Rental Income Gap Program assists with the cash flow for commercial business owners to help offset the revenue lost following the 2008 disasters. A maximum of twenty-five thousand dollars per unit is available as well as a maximum of twelve months. And finally, the Residential Landlord Business Support Program offers assistance to residential landlords to compensate for lost rental income. Eligible landlords with damaged units may receive up to fifteen-thousand dollars per business.

The buyout process is well under way. To date, one-hundred and fifty million dollars has been allocated for CDBG buyouts and there is more funding on the way.

There have been so many involved in the recovery process that it has brought awareness to the state's recovery effort. Iowa's disaster recovery efforts were recently featured in "[Domestic Preparedness Journal](#)." Iowa is setting a model for recovery and should make everyone who has participated in the recovery feel proud of their efforts.

Lt Gen Ron Dardis will be participating at national events to show what Iowa is doing as a state and how it is structured for recovery. Two of the events will be to the National Hurricane Center in Florida and the Brookings Institute in Washington, D.C. There is a lot of visibility as to how we are executing our disaster recovery and are being asked to share our best practices and lessons learned.

The mission of today's meeting is to come together and discuss the future and goals of the Rebuild Iowa Office and the coordinating council. The Rebuild Iowa Office has taken this seriously from the beginning and set many goals and have since modified them as the office has progressed. Today offers an opportunity to share ideas and get your input on where the RIO focus should be and to ensure there isn't anything missing from the process.

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#### **Legislative Update:**

**Susan Judkins Josten**

**SEE ATTACHED PRESENTATION**

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The Rebuild Iowa Office has submitted two bill requests for RIO initiatives. The first request is a smart planning proposal to make a positive impact with no initial financial investment. The state must adopt smart planning principals, outline a comprehensive plan, and create a task force to better coordinate between the state and local level. Secondly, case management is needed to connect victims with needed recovery resources. Not only is it important to have case management for disaster victims, but it is imperative to create a case management process for impacted businesses. A business case management task force is currently being established. DHS will ensure the structure that has been established from the 2008 floods stays in place.

The Rebuild Iowa Office has also worked with the Water Resources Coordinating Council to create floodplain management recommendations. RIO has submitted the recommendations for preliminary drafts.

Bill Ehm (DNR):

Chuck Gipp and Bill Ehm co-chaired the Water Resources Coordinating council. In all, twenty-five final recommendations were submitted to the Legislature by the November 15<sup>th</sup> deadline. The WRCC hopes to develop policy and funding resources to reduce the impact of floods in the future. Sixteen of the twenty-five were policy recommendations. One recommendation was to regulate the floodplain to increase it to the five hundred year floodplain. The WRCC agreed that changes must be made to prevent mitigate the impact of future disasters. Nine of the recommendations were revenue-related to support actives and appropriations, at the same time realizing they may not come to fruition due to the current budget situation. The recommendations are currently available on RIO's website located at <http://rio.iowa.gov/wrcc/resource.html>.

Q.) Dave Miller (HSEMD): How will extending the floodplain to the five hundred year level impact flood insurance rates?

A.) Bill Ehm (DNR): Although the WRCC didn't talk to the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) regarding the impact shifting the flood plain to the 500 year would cause, one would think such measures would reduce the insurance rates due to increased protection measures.

Ben Rogers (Linn County Board of Supervisors) representing Senator Hogg:

Linn County will ask that RIO still continues receiving funding in the upcoming Legislative session. Senator Hogg would also like to see a watershed management system until the levee is constructed. Linn County and Cedar Rapids, as well as the rest of the state, still face needs following the disaster.

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#### **Center on Sustainable Communities (COSC) Presentation**

**Leslie Berckes**

**SEE ATTACHED PRESENTATION**

There were no questions at the time for Leslie and the meeting moved to the next agenda item.

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#### **Discussion: Setting Disaster Recovery Goals for the Future:**

**Emily Hajek and Ron Randazzo**

**SEE ATTACHED PRESENTATION**

The presentation was broken down into three parts: **Initial, Interim and Future Recovery.**

Emily Hajek (RIO):

The next report is due January 10<sup>th</sup>, please take a look at it and offer us any comments. It is long, but it is set up so that you can easily find what you are looking for if you want to look at something more specific.

Lt Gen Ron Dardis (RIO):

One important thing about the RIAC reports is that they were created by lowans as we reached out across the state for their input. Also, actual dollar damage assessments were almost impossible to do. One of the examples was with Agriculture, the estimates showed between three to five million dollars in damage and the actual loss was more like one and a half million dollars.

Dave Miller (HSEMD):

Damage estimates are soft as they are just that, only estimates. One question is how do we as a state gather data during future disasters? One key area that lacks data altogether is the business area.

Emily Hajek (RIO):

Once FEMA knows there is enough damage to declare a federal disaster, the federal programs kick in and they stop collecting the damage information.

Ron Randazzo (RIO):

We are halfway through the Rebuild Iowa Office's lifecycle. The office is due to sunset June of 2011. How will RIO leave a strategy to ensure the recovery effort continues, even after the sunset date?

Emily Hajek (RIO):

In May of this year, FEMA facilitated a midcourse analysis of the disaster recovery process. Interviews and surveys were conducted to identify areas for improvements and best practices. One persisting issue with disaster recovery and disaster assistance programs is the sharing of personal information. There were multiple assistance programs that required the same information for disaster victims. There needs to be a process to share information among agencies while still protecting personal privacy.

Ron Randazzo (RIO):

Speak Up Iowa III Surveys are being developed to gain feedback from disaster victims across the state of Iowa. The survey process will launch in spring. A Lessons Learned campaign is in the works to collect input from local leaders regarding the recovery process.

Lt Gen Dardis (RIO):

With the Speak Up Iowa II Surveys distributed this Summer, of those impacted by the disaster, over seventy percent thought Iowa was on the right track with the recovery process. The common theme seemed to tell us that people were frustrated with the federal programs and needed assistance navigating their way through these programs.

**Starting at one side of the table and working around, each participant was asked for their input on what recovery goals need to be going forward.**

Dave Miller (HSEMD):

Dave stated that listening to the discussion in the room, there is a need for a National Recovery Framework as well as a National Mitigation Framework. Iowa needs to look at mitigation as a bigger picture such as with building requirements, more of an all hazards approach overall, building codes, enforcement, ensuring that buildings are built safer and stronger to withstand all disasters and hazards.

Matt Unger (IGOV):

Mitigation is a key factor to prevent the widespread impact of a future natural disaster. Mitigation and ongoing preparedness is needed in Iowa.

Doug Elliott (ECICOG)

Would like to continue to look at multi-jurisdictional planning opportunities, and added that not only did the Small Business Administration (SBA) assist businesses in this disaster but the Economic Development Administration (EDA) has assisted businesses too with Revolving Loan Funds that the COGs administer.

Stu Anderson (DOT):

The majority of impacted transportation has already been repaired. One area still lacking in assistance is railroad funding. They are working on assistance to reduce disaster loans for railroads.

Bill Ehm (DNR):

There were education recommendations in the Water Resources Coordinating Council (WRCC) report. When the flood plain changes, there is apprehension at the local level. Education about the changes and the positive impact they make is fundamental.

Joseph Jones (IFA):

Education is key in recovery. Disaster victims need to be able to understand the many different programs that exist, which is why education is so important.

Chuck Seel (IUB):

The Iowa Utilities Board (IUB) is supportive of smart planning and rebuilding green. When thinking about the recommendation to move the flood plain from the one hundred to the five hundred year level, there are a lot of utilities that are located within the flood plain. One positive note, with the 2007 ice storms, the IUB was forced to replace the damaged poles and in turn were replaced with more resilient ones which helped in the 2008 disasters.

Robert Grayson (OEI)

As Iowa rebuilds, there is a need for education to rebuild green and energy efficient. The Office of Energy Independence is working on Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) which allows cities and counties to create a fund which allows homeowners to make energy efficient improvements to their home. Homeowners then prepay their loans with an assessment on their property taxes that would be offset by reduced costs in their utilities.

Joe Mowers (IWD)

The Rebuild Iowa Office's exit strategy must be clearly identified as well as the roles of the remaining departments. Departments must know what is expected of them as RIO sunsets. There is a lot of success in the recovery process that should be celebrated while staying sensitive to those still struggling.

Joe O'Hern (IDED)

It has been a difficult task to balance the desire to recover immediately versus planning and rebuilding smartly. One aspect of the recovery that could have been done differently is establishing case management immediately following the disaster. The Iowa Department of Economic Development continues to work with federal partners on disaster recovery assistance. There is a lot of education regarding the disaster recovery process needed among all levels of government. There are also additional Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funds not yet allocated. Iowa is hoping to receive some of these funds in the future. The highest priority of many families right now is to get their living situation back together. This is aided by more Single Family New Construction funding.

Lt Gen Dardis (RIO):

Of the businesses impacted by the 2008 disasters, seventy-six percent have reopened (at least in Cedar Rapids). This is fifteen percent above the national average. Our goal is to keep these businesses open and encourage and help facilitate more opening as well.

Dave Miller (HSEMD):

Also stated that he didn't know what kind of disaster housing strategy the state had for housing or how it should be set up. The pilot project on the housing rehabilitation that was created here should be utilized during the next disaster.

Joe O'Hern (IDED)

What we allowed FEMA to do was move additional mobile homes into the area, instead spend money on multi housing rehab and allow people to move there...something else in the toolbox for FEMA when housing is overwhelmed in a disaster for them to use next time..it was a much more satisfying alternative for those people.

Ben Rogers (Linn County)

Preparedness through education for residents or businesses, education for policy makers to ensure consistency in the information that goes out. Improved communication channels as well.

Gary Schwartz (Education)

Since the disasters occurred during the summer months, it offered a learning experience for the education system on disaster preparedness. Who knows what would have happened if school had been in session during the floods and tornadoes? The Rebuild Iowa Office, as well as all participating in the disaster recovery process, needs to leave a blueprint for use during future disasters. As a state, we need to encourage disaster management and preparedness. It is important to look at the feasibility of moving schools and school transportation facilities out of the flood plain to mitigate future loss. Integrating safe rooms in to all schools should be a high priority as well as a standard in the state building codes.

Ljerka Vasiljevic (DPS)

Deadlines and short end goals need to be identified in the continuing recovery process. New flood plain maps need to be created and used to determine where new structures can safely be built. Work needs to be done on the state building code as it is not a minimum across the state. Local jurisdictions are not currently required to adopt the state building codes. Even if codes are adopted, greater measures need to be taken to keep builders and contractors honest with their building practices. The state has to establish mandatory minimum building code for all to follow.

Dave Miller added that an additional 5% funding can be added to mitigation funding if a standard building code is adopted for the state...the question is will it be enough of an incentive?

Keith Greiner (ICSAC)

Student assistance was implemented shortly after the disasters. After the floods of 1993 Keith had written a report about all that he had learned. However, with the change in the computer systems over the years, the soft copy of the report was lost. A copy of this report showed up on his desk a short time later, and it was being distributed to assist with what had been learned from 1993. This report was a valuable tool to learn from 1993 recovery process. A long-term communication and document retention system needs to be implemented. These disasters offer a chance to collect case studies, personal accounts, and other documentation to be placed in the state archives to be made available for future reference. Recording an entire conference for future use would be most beneficial.

Emily Hajek (RIO)

There are 2 goals, one is to ensure recovery from this disaster continues and second is how to leave behind what has been involved to assist in recovering in the future.

Chuck Seel (IUB):

Having had experience on 1993 documentation, he asked if Dave Miller could find out about table top exercise for recovery not just response.

Dave Miller (HSEMD):

There is a new area of emphasis; preparedness is planning, training and exercise. HSEMD does response and not as much recovery. Colleagues from other states to hold recovery exercises with Iowa, it will be interesting to see if the Federal Government will play a role.

Jerome Thomas (DCA)

Many state cultural institutions were impacted by the disasters. It would be beneficial to the state and these institutions to be better prepared in the future if another disaster were to occur. They need to identify how they will protect their vital records even consider geo-coding their locations. Work is being done to identify where vital records are being stored across the state. Storage of records is all over the place right now, State Historical Society, Iowa Museum Association, etc...DCA has received some funding and are in a survey mode, they are just now starting to get into the City Clerk offices. This information should be shared between cultural organizations as well as involving emergency managers to protect these important documents in the future.



Representative Tom Schueller:

What he is hearing brings to mind the saying, “Those who fail to study history are destined to repeat it”. Those that aren’t affected seem to forget about it pretty quickly. Educating citizens, leaders, and government is needed to prevent repeating history as it pertains to disaster recovery. It is evident universal requirements are needed in disaster assistance programs. Program requirements are different in each program which creates confusion for the disaster victim. The state needs to be proactive rather than reactive in disaster preparedness and response. I will do my best to lead my committee members towards that goal.

John McCalley (Dept of Aging)

Case management is needed for the frail elderly population in this state. The Department on Aging (IDA) works to connect older Iowans with Social Services Block Grant (SSBG) funding. They are working to identify ways to shift funding during times of disasters. The state must implement a roadmap for emergency preparedness. IDA worked to move individuals in to new facilities during the flood. Though required to have an emergency plan, many facilities could not follow through. Assisted living facilities aren’t required to have an emergency response plan. As these facilities grow and house more elderly Iowans, it becomes even more important to make sure response plans are in place.

A conference or consortium would be a good tool to help providers with the technical assistance they need, include the regulatory agencies such as DHS, DIA, IDPH, IDA, and any others we may have missed. Food and nutrition are also issues that are vitally important to recovery.

A tremendous opportunity is available with the Census they will be doing this year; you could utilize them for proactive messages and to get information from the census itself.

Every time he attends the RIO Coordinating Council meetings he learns something new and passes it on to those that may need it. Iowa was very lucky during the 2008 flooding, good collaboration in the state helped so much.

General Tim Orr (TAG/DPD)

Iowa should take the lessons learned from the disaster response and provide them to the national level. This can offer new ideas and insight to prompt change in the disaster recovery process. In comparing the 2008 disaster recovery process with the 1993 recovery, you can see the amazing changes that have occurred. It is imperative to capture the lessons learned from the 2008 disasters look at what a model would be for the future from the RIO. Develop an after action and continuity from RIO’s recovery process as well. Education, how do we train those that will come after us on the recovery and last create the hand-off process from RIO to HSEMD, what will the next steps be to ensure the ball doesn’t get dropped.

Dave Miller (HSEMD):

Document the work that the RIO has done, who has been involved in the process, how it needs to be maintained, and how to sustain the investment. A lot has happened through the RIO and we need to ensure sustainment of those efforts.

Special needs populations must be prepared in disasters whether disabled or elderly. There were many facilities required to have a disaster preparedness plan, but were unable to follow through with this plan when faced with a disaster. Having these special needs organizations better prepared to face future disasters is vital.

Agriculture and agribusiness cannot be forgotten or overlooked; Agriculture is more than corn and soybeans. Small and large farms were impacted by the disasters. Not only were there initial costs associated with damage to the land, but the loss of crops identified during harvest.

Emily Hajek (RIO)

Federal recommendations came out of discussions last May. FEMA came in and helped facilitate some meetings on best practices. What does the state/federal government need to do to change how they respond and recover? We have been in conversations with the Congressional delegation on how to share the information between all agencies while protecting privacy. Funding that is more focused on disaster recovery is needed.

Lt Gen Ron Dardis (RIO):

Anytime Federal Representatives have been here we have stated our needs as clearly as possible.

Lt Gen Ron Dardis

Thank you all for your participation. We will finalize our goals as we move forward. The Rebuild Iowa Office is always receptive to comments and ideas so feel free to contact RIO. The RIO Quarterly Report will be finished in January. Please feel free to review the report to identify if there is anything that is missing that would be an important addition to the report.

Emily encouraged all to review the Quarterly Report that will be coming out in January.

Adjournment